

Montana DEQ Forest Fire Smoke Advisory

August 28, 2007

10:00 AM Tuesday

FORECAST:

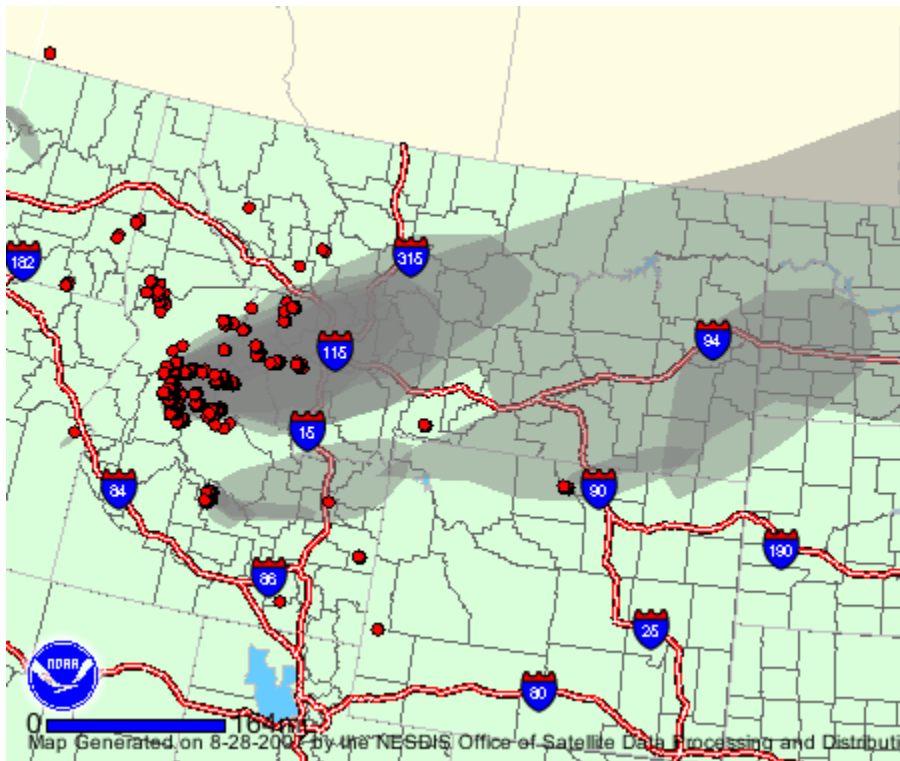
Fire activity was light in most area yesterday and there are no widespread areas of smoke. Smoke is visible in the southern Bitterroot, Rock Creek and Big Hole valleys this morning. Moderate conditions are still present in some western Montana communities from local fires. The fires in the Krassel complex west of Salmon, Idaho were active yesterday through the evening and smoke from those fires is just overhead in the Wisdom, Butte, Bozeman, and Dillon areas.

The flow aloft is from the west today and will start shifting to the southwest by tomorrow as a ridge builds into the northern Rockies. This will start shifting the Idaho smoke into the Missoula and Helena areas and should clear Dillon out by tomorrow. Later this morning, the smoke aloft will start to mix down to the surface and smoke will be noticeable under the thicker parts of the plume of smoke aloft. Hazy skies will be evident across the west and southwestern parts of the state. Direct plume impacts from local fires could be a problem this afternoon and evening. Residents near active fires or experiencing noticeable smoke levels should use the [VISIBILITY GUIDELINES](#) to determine smoke levels in their area and guide their activity decisions.

A morning satellite photo centered on Great Falls is illustrated below:



This morning's analysis from NOAA's satellite services division shows the active fires in Montana and the smoke plumes combining and spreading downwind (the analyzed smoke is based on yesterday's satellite coverage, the fire detects are based on last night's satellite coverage).



Red indicates hot spot detected. Grey represents smoke seen by satellite.
Fire size is exaggerated for visibility at this scale.

To identify individual fires on graphic above go here:

http://activefiremaps.fs.fed.us/lq_fire2.php

This MDT web cam photo from Big Hole Pass in southwest Montana at 9 am this morning shows the residual smoke from the fires in Idaho.



This morning's smoke report is below, comparing particulate levels where we have information to MDEQ's Forest Fire health advisory levels.

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DISCUSSION:

The smoke from recent fire activity is mostly aloft but [moderate](#) smoke levels are currently impacting Whitefish, Kalispell, Missoula, and Butte. There is a lot of smoke in the southwest corner of the state as some of the fires west of there in Idaho continued to be active through most of the night. Surface conditions are OK now but are expected to get worse occasionally later this morning and in the afternoon. The advisories in the table below represent conditions between midnight and 8 AM and may change substantially through the day. Residents downwind of the active fires and experiencing impacts from residual smoke will need to pay close attention to conditions in their area and use the [visibility guidelines](#) to determine current conditions.

[John Coefield](#)

Meteorologist

Montana Department of Environmental Quality

Locations and severity of forest fire smoke reports since midnight of the date above at reporting stations.

Real time particulate information is currently available in most of the larger urban areas from several different sources including: DEQ run PM-10 BAMS and PM2.5 BAMS, CS&KT run PM-10 TEOMS, NWS ASOS visibility monitors, and USFS remote access Nephelometers and BAMS.

Updated 10 AM August 28, 2007

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HAZARDOUS	
VERY UNHEALTHY	
UNHEALTHY	
UNHEALTHY FOR SENSITIVE GROUPS	
MODERATE	Whitefish T24 Kalispell T24 Missoula T24 Butte T8

T1(x)	One-hour TEOM or BAM value (number of values)
T8(x)	Eight-hour average TEOM or BAM value(number of values)
T24	24 hour average TEOM or BAM value
Vis(x)	Visibility value(number of hours)
Vis(am/pm)	Visibility value from twice/day reporting stations
(est)	estimate

Local impacts in areas immediately adjacent to active fires are expected to exceed some or all of the advisory levels. DEQ recommends the use of local [visibility guidelines](#) to evaluate possible health risks and make informed activity decisions.